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ABSTRACT

The school-based teacher educator (SBTE) is a classroom teacher who is responsible for preservice, inservice, or continuing education at a school or district level while maintaining a primary work location in an elementary or secondary classroom. Teachers in this role have the potential for enhancing faculty morale by responding to both the professional and personal development needs of the faculty and by utilizing other teachers as resources within the designed program. SBTE program possibilities can be accommodated to the needs of the school, the school culture, and the developmental stages of the teachers. A description is given of four types of SBTE programs: (1) mentorship programs; (2) a resident supervisor's program; (3) a regional staff development center associate program; and (4) a peer coaching program. (JD)

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ERIC DIGEST

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The Classroom Teacher As Teacher Educator

The culture of schools historically isolates the teacher in the classroom. The desire for increased and varied responsibility within the teaching field has traditionally been accomplished by leaving the classroom and advancing into an administrative role. That, however, is not always the desire of the career teacher. Opportunities to expand the teaching role while remaining a classroom teacher are achievable through a staff development program that recognizes adult learning and development stages and capitalizes upon the classroom teacher as a teacher educator. This concept is recognized and supported through career stage development activities advocated in various reform reports including the Holmes Group report, *Tomorrow's Teachers* and the Carnegie Task Force report, *A Nation Prepared: Teachers for the 21st Century*.

Competencies and Roles

The classroom teacher who is a school-based teacher educator (SBTE) can be responsible for preservice, inservice, or continuing education at a school or district level, while maintaining a primary work location in the elementary or secondary classroom. Teachers in this role have the potential for enhancing faculty morale by responding to both the professional and personal development needs of the faculty and by utilizing other teachers as resources within the designed program. Critical skills needed by the SBTE include interpersonal ease; group facilitation; educational content; initiative taking; rapport building; support, confrontation, collaboration, diagnosing, and demonstration abilities (Saxl, Lieberman, Miles, 1987).

The SBTE program possibilities are as broad or as narrow as the needs of the school, the school culture, and the developmental stages of the teachers. Teacher needs have been addressed most recently through the career lattice model. This model (Christensen, McDonnell, & Price, 1988) views a teacher's career as moving within a cycle which includes the stages of "preservice," "induction," "competency building," "enthusiastic and growing," "career frustrations," "stable and stagnant," "career wind-down," and "career exit." These stages are dynamically influenced, either singularly or in combination, by personal environmental factors such as family demands, crises, cumulative experience, and individual dispositions; and by organizational environmental factors such as societal expectations, administrative style, regulations, and union guidelines. Collaborative planning between the SBTE and the administration, which recognizes the unique personal and institutional needs of teachers and the school, nurtures the total school culture.

Adapting and maintaining the following suggested guidelines contributes to the success of an SBTE program. First, the SBTE should be identified on the basis of competence (taking into account the skills needed) and not simply by position or years of teaching. Second, the SBTE should be familiar with or receive additional education in adult learning and development. Third, the SBTE should be familiar with the current research in teaching and related areas. Fourth, the administration should revise the job description of the SBTE to reflect the additional responsibilities added to the ongoing teaching schedule. Fifth, the administration should make arrangements for the SBTE to have needed time to prepare and deliver the agreed upon program. Sixth, the administration and the SBTE should recognize that use of additional, outside resource personnel (i.e., speakers, peer coaches) may be appropriate to implement the professional development program successfully (Wu, 1987).

SBTE Models

A wide range of programs which benefit from using the classroom teacher as teacher educator can be designed. The following descriptions illustrate four examples of SBTE programs.

Mentorship programs are rooted in the belief that adults have the capacity for continued growth and learning, and that this development can be influenced by specific types of interventions which both support and challenge (Levine, 1989). A mentor relationship supports the teacher who is new to the profession, district, building, grade level, or subject matter. The mentor, who must now articulate second-nature, unconscious teaching behaviors to another, brings these effective teaching skills to a renewed level of awareness. "This re-examination and reassessment, combined with the exposure to new ideas in subject matter pedagogy and effective teaching research often brought by the beginning teacher, stimulates professional growth on the part of the mentor as well" (Louchs-Horsley, Harding, Arbuckle, Murray, Dubea, & Williams, 1987, p. 90).

A *Resident Supervisor's Program* has been initiated in the Master of Arts in Teaching (M.A.T.) program at National-Louis University in Evanston, Illinois. This SBTE program provides alternative leadership roles and educational experiences for the classroom teacher selected as the resident supervisor. A permanent substitute assigned to the resident supervisor's classroom assumes teaching responsibilities while the SBTE interacts with the cooperating teachers and the student teachers; attends college-based meetings; develops the supervision skills of the cooperating teachers; and assists in

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presentations to preservice teacher education classes. In addition to the regular district salary, the resident supervisor receives a small stipend per student and travel expenses for supervision and meetings (Christensen, 1989).

The Regional Staff Development Center supplements the professional development of the educational community of Kenosha and Racine counties in Wisconsin, and provides the classroom teacher with the specialized leadership roles of *center associate, program coordinator,* and *mentor.* A center associate is an experienced classroom teacher who takes a one-year leave of absence from the classroom to work full-time at the center monitoring on-going programs, developing group facilitation skills, writing grants, and producing a monthly newsletter. In addition, the associate identifies and facilitates the successful accomplishment of a self-chosen professional development plan which might include "national and/or regional conference participation, credit courses, team teaching with a college faculty member, supervising student teachers, [and] conducting research" (Letven & Klobuchar, 1990, p. 9). A program coordinator is a full-time classroom teacher who, for a stipend, organizes and facilitates the after-school networking activities of faculty members from local school districts and higher education institutions who share a disciplined interest. Mentors serve to induct beginning teachers into the culture of the school and into the teaching profession, and receive pay or time trade-offs.

The Fort Worth Independent School District in Texas (Leggett & Hoyle, 1987) concluded that inservice follow-up through *peer coaching* would help teachers adopt new teaching behaviors and strategies. Sixteen mastery learning specialists, who continue to teach at least two classes per day, are responsible for workshop scheduling, arranging for substitute teachers, providing the peer coaching and other related training, monitoring the coaching process, and providing feedback within the coaching process. To transition peer coaching into an ongoing component of the everyday life of the school, the mastery learning specialist assists in forming permanent building-based coaching teams who "choose their own goals for coaching and who coach each other at regular, frequent intervals throughout the year" (p. 20).

Conclusion

Restructuring the role of the classroom teacher as a teacher educator to facilitate the expansion of professional skills, is reflective of the dynamic nature of adult development. There is diversity among experienced classroom teachers in their career stages and in the personal and professional characteristics they bring to the classroom. What is appropriate for one teacher as an incentive for professional growth may not be appropriate for another teacher. Therefore, options and alternatives for staff development that are consistent with the realities of teacher career stages will lead to the greater professionalization of the teacher (Christensen et al., 1988). Opening an avenue of teacher growth through school-based teacher education, the classroom teacher is provided the opportunities to promote and support peer teacher growth, to experience empowerment by facilitating local change, to assume a leadership role without relinquishing the classroom, and to develop teaching behaviors which blend clinical skills with practitioner-translated research and theory. This revitalization of the teaching role with new responsibilities benefits the schooling process and its participants, and is achievable when the classroom teacher becomes a teacher educator.

References

References identified with an EJ or ED number have been abstracted and are in the ERIC data base. Journal articles (EJ) should be available at most research libraries; documents (ED) are available in ERIC microfiche collections at more than 700 locations. Documents can also be ordered through the ERIC Document Reproduction Service: (800) 227-3472. For more information contact the ERIC Clearinghouse on Teacher Education, One Dupont Circle, NW, Suite 610, Washington, DC 20036; (202) 293-2450.

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